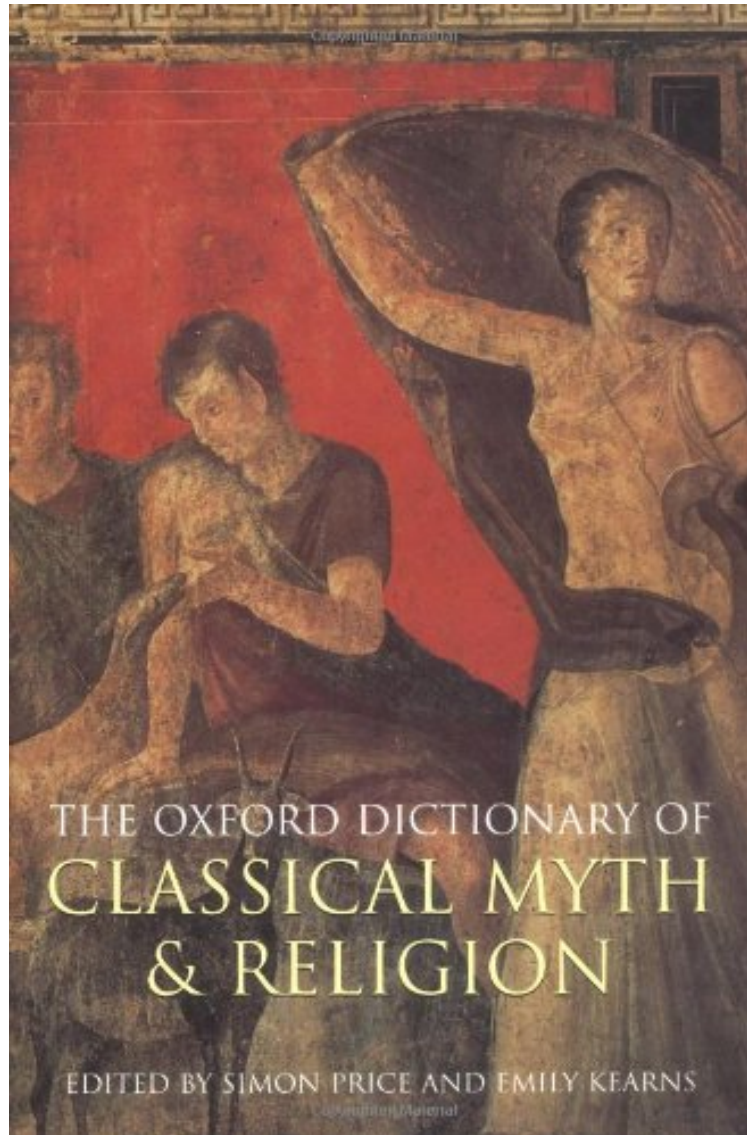


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The Oxford Dictionary of Classical Myth and Religion

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From Oxford University Press : The Oxford Dictionary of Classical Myth and Religion before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Oxford Dictionary of Classical Myth and Religion:

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was intended as a reference work and will be used as such by those who purchase it, for the most part. But, being the rather rum fellow that I am, I read the book from cover to cover and must report that it makes a dashed good read, at least for the peculiar bunch who, like myself, enjoy reading through such compilations. Just one fascinating example: I should never have known, had I not read through the work, that, according to ancient folklore, "A man who sees them becomes possessed by nymphs. They punish unresponsive lovers...." or that "Around 400 BC inscriptions mention Archedemus from Thera....who withdrew to a cave to devote himself to a monklike worship of the Nymphs." Clearly, entries like these prove rich ground for pondering male/female relations. And this is just one example! The perfect book for the Classicist near you....or perhaps yourself.

Drawn from the acclaimed Oxford Classical Dictionary, The Oxford Dictionary of Classical Myth and Religion offers a fully rounded guide to all aspects of religious life and thought in ancient Greece and Rome. Highly authoritative, this new book covers not only Greek mythologies and Roman festivals, but also devotes attention to topics such as Greek and Roman religious places, monuments, authors and texts, religious organization, imagery, divination, astrology, and magic. Unlike many other references on ancient Greece and Rome, the Dictionary also includes many entries on Judaism and Christianity in the classical world. The editors, area advisors for the third edition of the Oxford Classical Dictionary, have selected, revised, edited, and in some instances completely recast a large number of entries from the OCD to create this handy and accessible reference. The main text is supplemented by an important introductory essay providing overviews of mythology, religious pluralism in the ancient world, and the reception of myths from antiquity to the present. In addition to a helpful thematic index and extensive cross-references, the text is further supported by three maps and six genealogies. Backed by the authority and scholarly rigor of the renowned Oxford Classical Dictionary, The Oxford Dictionary of Classical Myth and Religion is a valuable A-Z reference and is as ideal a tool for students and teachers of ancient history as it is for all classics lovers.

From School Library Journal Grade 10 Up-Culled from the Oxford Classical Dictionary, third edition (2003), these entries cover the whole of spiritual life in the ancient Mediterranean, from Minoan-Mycenaean religion through Near Eastern Judaisms [sic] and early Christianities [sic]. The compact introductory essay on mythology, pluralism, and reception of myths is a model of comprehensiveness and clarity. Most entries cover personalities (gods, heroes, authors, historical figures), but several of them offer concise summaries of related topics: religious architecture, funerary art, apocalyptic literature, places and rituals, organizations, and calendars. Entries on several dozen concepts (e.g., fasting, deformity, theodicy, pollution, the body, hubris) are fascinating. However, there is no entry for "Underworld." References to substantial retellings in ancient texts (e.g., Sophocles, Homer) follow relevant entries. Cross-references are easily identified. Pronunciation help, alas, is omitted. A brief annotated bibliography, thematic index, six genealogies, and three detailed maps greatly add to the volume's utility. Longer than Mike Dixon-Kennedy's Encyclopedia of Greco-Roman Mythology (ABC-CLIO, 1998), which does not include religion, this book emphasizes historical connections. It devotes a half page to Xenophanes, for instance, who does not appear in Kennedy's volume, but omits Encyclopedia's "Xanthus." The specialized nature of the dictionary makes it essential for only a few collections. Nevertheless, it is an excellent addition to the series.--Patricia D. Lothrop, St. George's School, Newport, RI Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. From Booklist The content of this encyclopedia is a selection of entries from the third edition of The Oxford Classical Dictionary (3d ed., 1996). The entries are broad in range, covering not just mythology but also "religious places and religious officials, divination, astrology, and magic." In addition, there are many entries on Judaism and Christianity, providing broader context to religious life in the Greco-Roman world. Although entries have been taken from The Oxford Classical Dictionary, changes have been made. Some entries have been shortened. Untransliterated Greek, references to ancient texts within the body of an entry, and what the editors term obscure language have been deleted. Supplemental bibliographies have also been eliminated, although entries for individuals (e.g., Hecuba, Poseidon) often conclude with some references to their appearance in ancient texts by such authors as Homer, Hesiod, and Livy. The work also includes a short annotated bibliography to serve as a guide for further reading. An introductory essay describes local, Panhellenic, and Roman myths and their reception throughout history. A thematic index groups entries by broad subject area (e.g., "Gods and Heroes," "Places"), and there are see references throughout the work. A few maps serve as the only illustrations. Libraries owning The Oxford Classical Dictionary will not gain much by purchasing The Oxford Dictionary of Classical Myth and Religion. The elimination of much of the scholarly content may diminish its usefulness to academic collections. On the other hand, some public and high-school libraries may find the work more accessible and thus of greater benefit. In this case, consideration ought to be given first to the Cassell Dictionary of Classical Mythology (1998). Although its scope is somewhat narrower, the entries are thorough, scholarly, and accessibly written; there are many illustrations; and the scholarly apparatus of references to ancient texts and other supplemental material is unobtrusively included for those wishing to pursue their research further. RBB Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved "A model of comprehensiveness and clarity....It is an excellent addition to the series."--School Library Journal "A generally accessible and academically current compendium of

information on gods and holy beings, religious practices, festivals, sacred rites, myths, authors, and texts....a useful one-volume compendium."--Library Journal"A model of comprehensiveness and clarity....It is an excellent addition to the series." --School Library Journal